

Wing Tips

108th Air Refueling Wing
New Jersey Air National Guard
May 2003 Volume 3 Issue 5



108th members do their part

By Senior Airman Qianna Snooks
Wing Tips Writer



The war in Iraq has called on many servicemembers nationwide to devote time overseas, leaving friends and family behind. Guard members from the 108th Air Refueling Wing were no exception.

In late Feb./early March, the 108th ARW saw close to 300 unit members deployed overseas to various locations. While some found themselves in Western Europe, others traveled to an undisclosed location in the North Atlantic.

Regardless of the location, they all made valuable contributions to *Operations Iraqi Freedom*, *Enduring Freedom*, and *Noble Eagle*. Those participating overseas consisted mainly of members drawn from the 108th Operations Group, Logistics Group, Logistics Supply, and the Wing.

According to 108th Operations Group Vice Commander Lt. Col. Robert "Rory" Doolittle, Ops played a support role in the North Atlantic, helping with the refueling of everything from bombers and fighters to reconnaissance and cargo planes.

Senior Airman William J. Waydelis, a 108th Logistics Squadron inspector, was also stationed in the North Atlantic, with several other LS members. According to Waydelis, his section was responsible for issuing parts and equipment, making sure that military members were well supplied.

However, the North Atlantic wasn't the only locale in which 108th members made an impact.

Master Sgt. Katie Hines, the wing's 1st Sergeant, for example, was stationed in Western Europe. While there, she helped to take care of the servicemembers, dealing with everything from "A to Z", said the 1st Sergeant. Common issues revolved around morale, welfare and recreation.

According to Hines, there were other units stationed there, however when someone came to her with an issue, as a 1st Sergeant, she didn't make that distinction. Her tour lasted a total of 45 days, with some time also being spent in the North Atlantic.

Overall, the 108th's missions abroad have been quite successful. Unit members left answering the call of duty and returned with a lifetime worth of memories, knowing they had served their country well.

Wing gets new commander

Col. Lawrence S. Thomas, III was named Commander, 108th Air Refueling Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, McGuire AFB, N.J. on April 13, 2003. Born on Sept. 30, 1954, in Somers Point, N.J., the colonel graduated with honors from Pleasantville High School, N.J., in 1972. He graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering from Ohio University in 1977. His military education includes Navy Fighter Weapons School, Topgun; Squadron Officers School; Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College.



Colonel Thomas' military career began in August 1977 when he received his commission as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. In Sept. that same year, he began training as a Student Naval Aviator at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas. Colonel Thomas was designated a Naval Aviator following training at Naval Air Station Beville, Texas, where he graduated number one in his class. After completing F-14 training at Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia, Colonel Thomas was assigned to Fighter Squadron 41 - The Black Aces - aboard the USS Nimitz. During that period he participated in numerous military actions. Colonel Thomas flew combat air patrol for 'Eagle Claw,' the Iranian hostage rescue attempt in April 1980. He flew defensive counter air missions during the Libyan Gulf of Sidra incident in August 1981 which lead to the downing of two Libyan SU-22s. Upon completion of this tour in February 1983, he had performed 443 aircraft carrier landings, of which 160 were night carrier landings.

Following his US Navy active duty tour, Colonel Thomas was selected to serve in the ANG. In August 1986, Colonel Thomas was sworn in as a member of the 177th Fighter Wing. After completing training in Great Falls, Montana he was designated as a mission ready F-106 pilot. In May 1988, he completed F-16A conversion training. Seven years later, he returned to school for F-16C transition training. Colonel Thomas has served as the 119th Fighter Squadron's Director of Operations, the 177 Fighter Wing's Vice Commander and the 177th Fighter Wing Commander. His last assignment was HQ NJANG Director of Operations and also as HQ NJANG Inspector General. Colonel Thomas is employed as an Airbus 320 pilot for US Airways. He and his wife have two children.

Editor's Note: On May 3, in another round of departures, the first of four KC-135s carrying 108th unit members headed to the North Atlantic, again in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. To date, there are approximately 150 folks there, with another 50-plus unit members deployed around the globe.



Grier wins state officer's association award

By Maj. Ron Turk
Commander, 108th Security Force Squadron

Capt. Brian Grier, 108th Security Force Squadron, was named 2002 Outstanding Company Grade Officer – Air Award. Grier is operations officer for the 108th SFS.

Grier has been mobilized for the past 18 months under Operation Enduring Freedom. After Sept. 11, 2001, he rapidly assembled and led a team at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., protecting critical Air National Guard resources. For more than six months, Grier was deployed to MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., to supervise a security shift at the base and for Central Command. He has also assisted Air Mobility Command's prisoner transport teams, supporting the transport of prisoners from Afghanistan to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Grier attended the Army's Air Assault School in Fort Campbell, Ky.

He is an investigator for the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office. Grier has 13 years of military service, and is formerly enlisted.

Security Forces Squadron gains new superintendent



By Maj. Ron Turk
Commander, 108th Security Force Squadron

Master Sgt. Lance Endee, 108th Security Force Squadron, recently became superintendent and the senior non-commissioned officer-in-charge of full-time operations. Endee replaced Chief Master Sgt. David Obetz, who now serves as security forces manager at the National Guard Bureau.

Endee and his staff oversee support functions that include, but are not limited to, vehicle pass and registration, weapons qualifications, force protection guidance and training, and the security clearance program.

Endee is one of approximately 90 security force members mobilized under Operation Enduring Freedom.

He has more than 18 years of military service, including more than six years on active duty.



108th MEO Chief is first winner of Williams Leadership award

By Senior Airman Zakia Ray
Wing Tips Staff Writer

The New Jersey Air National Guard recently named 1st Lt. Reginald Washington the first recipient of the Lieutenant Thomas E. Williams Leadership Award. Washington, chief of the 108th Military Equal Opportunity office, has been with the 108th Air Refueling Wing since 1992.

The award honors the memory of 1st Lt. Thomas E. Williams, the New Jersey Air National Guard's first African-American aviator. Williams is credited with helping usher in the civil rights movement. June 23, 1953, while commuting in full service dress from Eglin Field, Fla., to Craig Air Force Base in Selma, Ala., Williams politely declined to yield his seat on the bus and was charged with violating the Jim Crow law. Later on, he was instrumental in the passage of an amendment to the Interstate Commerce Act prohibiting the segregation of passengers on buses or other vehicles on the basis of race or color. Williams died during a training mission January 15, 1955.

In accordance with award criteria, Washington was selected because of his strong personal character, the leadership skills he exhibits and his dedication in the battle against intolerance.

Washington noted that despite his long-standing commitment to equal opportunity and diversity he was "surprised to be nominated." He added, "I am extremely honored by the recognition. I find my work here rewarding and hope to continue combating injustice."

Outstanding Airman of the Year

Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Clifford Gianpiero on being named the National Guard Association of New Jersey's Maj. Gen. Donald J. Strait Outstanding Airman for the year.

Gianpiero is a member of the Readiness section and his supervisor, Master Sgt. Cynthia Martinson submitted him for the award.

Questions from board members included ones on current events and opinions on how to increase retention and attendance at drill. While he has been to other boards, he admitted that it never gets easier.

Odds and Ends

What's happening

May

May 12-15 - National Guard Week
May 26 - Memorial Day holiday

June

June 14 - Flag Day
June 15 - Father's Day
June 21 - Summer begins
June 21 - Bring-A-Buddy Day

July

July 4 - Independence Day
July 20 - Family Day

Enlisted Conferences in Aug., Oct.

The New Jersey National Guard State Enlisted Conference will be held Oct. 24-26 at Valley Forge, Pa. Call 609-530-6977 for more information.

The 32nd Annual National Conference of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States will be held August 17-23, 2003, in Toledo, Ohio. The host hotel is the Radisson. The business sessions will be held at the Convention Center. For more information on the conference, go to <http://www.eangus.org/conference.htm> or <http://www.toledoohionow.com/>.

Vacancy announcement

The 108th ARW has a vacancy for an Aircraft Maintenance Officer, AFSC 21A3. The maximum military grade is major and commission-eligible candidates are encouraged to apply. Persons desiring consideration for this position should prepare an AF Form 24, a detailed military and civilian resume, copy of AFOQT results, college transcripts, letter of recommendation from their current unit commander, and a letter of intent. Applicants must possess qualifications or be willing to become qualified as outlined in AFMAN 36-2105 and ANGI 36-2005. Application packages should be sent to Tech. Sgt. Tania Prairie, 108 MPF/DPMPE, 3324 Charles Blvd., McGuire AFB, NJ 08641, and must be received not later than May 31, 2003. Call 609-754-2308 with questions.

Wing Tips deadlines

The deadline for June *Wing Tips* is June 5. Articles/photos should be emailed to: pa.108arw@njmcgu.af.mil.

When submitting digital photos, please ensure they are a minimum of 400 dpi. All articles must be in Word format.

Deadline for, July *Wing Tips* is July 8, August *Wing Tips* is July 30 and September *Wing Tips* is Aug. 27.

Outstanding Unit Award

The 405th Air Expeditionary Wing was awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor for those deployed from Dec. 28, 2001 through May 31, 2002. All 108th ARW members who were deployed to Oman during this time are authorized this medal. The AFOU Award is awarded for exceptionally meritorious achievement or meritorious service. "V" denotes actions in combat (Valor). For more information, contact the 108th Military Personnel Flight at 609-754-4466.

Condolences

Our condolences to retired Lt. Col. Brendan Bonner, former NJANG Executive Staff Support Officer, whose wife, Carlotta, passed away on April 5.

Our condolences also to the family of retired Lt. Col. Raymond E. Kerlin of the 108th Tactical Hospital who passed away on June 12, 2002.

MDS achieves excellence

The 108th Medical Squadron recently underwent the rigors of the Air Force Inspection Agency's Health Services Inspection. The HSI serves to assess readiness, provide an independent assessment of medical care, evaluate and report on the effectiveness and the efficiency of medical management and to identify any fraud, waste, or abuse.

The men and women of the 108th MDS stepped up to the challenge and received an overall score of "Excellent" for the inspection. Thanks to everyone for their uncompromising support.

Flag retirement ceremony

If you have an American flag that has become unserviceable, the Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery is offering a flag retirement ceremony. Flags that are brought or mailed to the administrative building at the cemetery by May 31 will be burned at a local crematory and the ashes will be buried in a ceremony at the cemetery on Flag Day, June 14. Flags may be mailed to 350 Provinceline Road, Wrightstown, NJ 08562. This program will be on-going and flags received after May 31 will be retired at the next Flag Day ceremony.

MPA days, lodging payment

All 108th ARW members performing active duty on MPA days are responsible for paying their lodging costs using the government credit card. Members should file a travel voucher attaching all hotel receipts and forward it to 108th Finance for reimbursement. Members should not come to Services for a lodging card, but must make their own reservations by calling 609-754-2954/3336/3337. Call Master Sgt. Toni Caceres, 609-754-2320 if you have questions.

Wing Vacancies

Here are the vacancies throughout the wing and the number of openings available.

Operations Group

Medical Tech – 2
Admin Asst – 3
Flight Records – 1
Boom Operator – 2
(1) full time
Airfield Manager – 1
Officers
Pilot – 4
Intelligence – 1

Logistics Group

Crew Chief – 28
Fuels Tech – 4
Supply Mgmt – 5
Vehicle Maint Tech – 5
Contracting Spec – 3
MOCC Controller – 4
Engine Mgmt Tech – 3
Plans & Programs Tech – 1

AGE – 1
NDI – 2
Propulsion Tech – 1
Aircraft Ground Equip Spec – 12
Sheet Metal Tech – 12
Guidance & Control Tech – 14
Comm/Nav Tech – 5
Fuel Systems Tech – 7
Hydraulic Tech – 7
Officers
Maint officer – 1

Support Group

Ground Comm Radio Spec – 1
Personnel Spec – 3
Security Forces Spec – 15
Power Production Tech – 2
Liquid Fuels Tech – 2
Environmental (Entomologist) – 1
Readiness Tech – 1

Weather Forecaster/Observer – 4
Officers
Weather Forecaster – 1

Medical Squadron

Public Health Tech – 1
Medical Supply Tech – 1
Bio-Med Equip Repair Tech – 1
Bioenvironmental Tech – 1
Dietary Tech – 1
Cardio Lab Tech – 1
Medical Tech – 3
Lab Tech – 1
Optometry Tech – 2
Dental Tech – 1
Officers
Flight Surgeon – 2
Aero-Med Spec – 1
Public Health – 1
Bio-Med Lab – 1
Pharmacist – 1
Optometrist – 1
Dentist – 1

Wing Staff

Safety Craftsman – 1

Wing-wide training hours available UTA Sundays

As of Jan.1 all units are afforded the opportunity to conduct In-House Training from 1-4 p.m. every Sunday of the UTAs. Please have members check with their Unit Deployment Manager, Ancillary Training Monitor, supervisors and/or commanders for scheduled training location and instructors for their sections. CCTV schedule of broadcasts are available in the UTA Bulletin. All broadcasts are on Channel 8.

Wing Tips on 3 Web sites

Wing Tips is now accessible to retirees, unit members and the public on three different Web sites.

It will be placed on the following public Web sites – <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mcguireairguardians> and <http://www.108arw.ang.af.mil>.

Unit members will also find it on the members-only Web site at <https://108mbr.ang.af.mil>.

Printed color copies will be distributed to buildings 3305, 3306, 3324, 3333, 3369, 3390 and 1818.

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Blessing for all

Chaplain (Maj.) Tom Klaasen

One of my friends catches people's attention when he says, "Have a blessed day!" (To pronounce the word as he does, I suppose one could write, "blest.") This phrase adds something powerful to the normal wishes we offer one another when we say, "Good-bye," or "Have a good day." The added factor is the wish that God will show favor to the person in every circumstance.

We just recently said "God be with you" to another group of our wing who deployed overseas. Some of our Security Forces have been almost continually deployed for a year and a half already. They all need God's blessing in a serious way!

There's a blessing that is commonly used in both Jewish and Christian worship services. It's found in Numbers 6:24-26. It goes like this in the New Revised Standard Version of the Hebrew scriptures,

"The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

This is the kind of blessing we as a wing wish for those who are deployed, as well as for their loved ones back home. It's a richly textured blessing that rewards serious reflection on it. The last phrase of each line could be joined together and summarized in this way, "Our wish for you is that God will keep you safe because of his wonderful grace, and that you will experience peace."

The last word, "peace," almost leaps off the page. We wish "shalom" for our people, and in fact, for the world. It's not simply the absence of war, or trouble. It's well-being, happiness, and contentment. "Have a blessed day!"

Chaplain's Corner



Project Fun at the Beach offers free shore units for families of deployed military

Project Fun At The Beach began May 1, 2003 and is designed to show appreciation for our soldiers, sailors and airmen by providing free housing units at the Jersey Shore for the families of military personnel assigned to fight the war on terrorism and who have been deployed since Sept. 11, 2001.

The project was the idea of Stacy Jordan of Moorestown and her mother, Michele Farias, of Edgewater Park, who own rental properties on Long Beach Island.

Families of any military personnel deployed since Sept. 11, 2001 are eligible and only need to call the Burlington County Active Duty Assistance Program hotline at 609-265-5222 to check for available dates. ADAP will administer requests through various realtors and chambers of commerce in the shore communities.

Though ADAP provides information and referrals for families of National Guard and Reservists living in Burlington County who are activated, there is no residency requirement for Project Fun At The Beach. Proof of activation (copy of orders) will be required.

Requests will be handled on a first-come first-serve basis according to unit availability. Families just need to have date(s) they are requesting, number of beds needed, and if there are any special needs, such as handicapped access or cribs. Project Fun At The Beach will attempt to satisfy all requests.

Food for Thought



From the desk of Maj. Jacqueline Vesey

These are the Air Force's maximum body fat standards (IAW *ANGI 40-502*):

Twenty percent (20%) for men 29 years old and younger

Twenty-four percent (24%) for men 30 years old and older

Twenty-eight percent (28%) for women 29 years old and younger

Thirty-two percent (32%) for women 30 years old and older

Diet Tips

The following are tips from nutritionists to help you change your eating habits:

Do not try to change all your eating habits at the same time.

Start with a change that will not be too difficult. For example, lower the fat content of the milk you drink. If you drink whole milk, try 2 percent instead.

Add other changes when your new habit is established.

Share recipes and tips with others who are trying to lower their cholesterol.

Experiment with tasty, low-fat, low-cholesterol dishes.

Remember, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about your diet you should always talk to your doctor.

DoD facts on SARS disease on Web site

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is a respiratory disease that is spreading in the Asian continent, with isolated cases in Europe and North America. The Department of Defense, through the Military Health System, is actively involved in monitoring this outbreak, and supporting both international and U.S. health authorities as needed. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) has provided a fact sheet on the disease, and steps that can be taken to avoid it. For more information, see <http://www.ha.osd.mil/asd/message.html>.

Family Care Plan needs to be in place, ready

By Master Sergeant Severn Jackson, Logistics Squadron First Sergeant

Is your family care plan in-place? The Air Force recognizes family support as a personal moral obligation. Having a viable Family Care Plan in place establishes a sound foundation for family support in the event of your absence. The intent of the Air Force Family Care Program is to ensure that at the time of mobilization our force is ready to deploy with minimal distractions and delays. Although the requirement specifically requires members with families develop a plan and maintain a documented plan with their unit, all members should ensure that they are deployable and that personal matters, which could affect their deployability, or performance, are dealt with prior to activation, and not at the time of activation.

Who Will Have A Family Care Plan? Air Force Instruction 36-2908 mandates that all Air Force members with families will have family care arrangements that reasonably cover all situations, both short and long term.

Who Must Document Their Family Care Plan? If you are a single parent, dual military couple with family members, and/or a member with a civilian spouse who has a unique family situation, you must ensure that a documented Family Care Plan is established and maintained with your unit First Sergeant.

Why Do Air Force Members Need a Family Care Plan? Air Force personnel are deploying at an all-time high to meet the challenges of supporting contingency operations. Contingency operations requiring temporary duty (TDY), along with overseas assignments to family-restricted areas and other duties requiring members to be separated from their family, require unique family arrangements. Each Air Force member is responsible for the care of family members during these circumstances. The Air Force assures itself of an available force to meet all of its needs by making certain that each member has made adequate arrangements for the care of his/her family members.

Any family separation can cause anxiety and stress. A pre-positioned Family Care Plan will make the separation a little more comfortable for you and your family. Show them how important they are to you and put a workable plan in-place, today! Remember, it is your responsibility to notify the First Sergeant or Commander of any changes that affect your Family Care Plan.

Bring a buddy to work

By Master Sgt. Frank Beltran-Bell
108th ARW Retention Office Manager

The 108th ARW will hold its second annual "Bring a Buddy Day" on June 21. This event is designed to showcase our wing as the employer of choice to potential recruits.

Each unit member is asked to bring at least one buddy who might be interested in joining the unit. Recruiters and Unit Career Advisors will be available to talk about educational benefits and incentives offered by the NJANG.

Bring a Buddy Day kicks off at 9 a.m. in the auditorium of Building 3390 with a presentation of colors and a welcome from the wing commander. Work centers will be available for touring at designated times.

Questions? Cal Senior Master Sgt. Rocky Ryan at 609-754-8194.

AF Parent Program - Lapel Pins Available

Parents of active duty or Reserve airmen can display their pride with a new lapel pin the Air Force is distributing under the AF Parent Program, launched May 5. Parents will receive personalized letters from AF Secretary James Roche and Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper, along with a blue lapel pin displaying the AF symbol with a "P" cradled between the wings. Military personnel can log onto www.yourguardianssoffreedom.com to order pins for their parents or for two parental figures.

108th CE member returns from Kandahar

By Tech Sgt. Ernie Loveday, 108th Civil Engineer Squadron

July 2002 - Kandahar International Airport. We had arrived. The air was full of dust and the heat was up there. It wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. Our mission at the airport was to restore 10 underground fuel tanks from the existing fuel system. The fuel system had taken quite a beating and not much was usable, but the underground tanks had possibilities. If we could recover all of them it would increase the capacity at the airport by 400,000 gallons.

Air Combat Command had put together the crew. They consisted of personnel from Nebraska, South Carolina, Delaware, North Dakota, any myself, representing New Jersey.

The mission was simple: clean and return to service as many of the tanks as possible. We started out cleaning all of the dirt, bricks, bottles (yes, bottles), and dead birds. The crew then split into two teams: a cleaning crew and an inspection crew. The cleaning crew proceeded to wash out the interior of each tank with the help of a Kandahar Fire Department truck and a lot of hose. The water was then pumped out. The inspection crew used an ultrasound non-destructive tester and a vacuum box to test the integrity of the tank walls and floor. When the testing was all done there were some repairs that the entire group helped accomplish.

All in all it was an adventure and a successful mission. We recovered 7 of the 10 tanks. There is a sense of pride that we had been able to participate in helping the mission in Kandahar. The 12 to 16 hour days and the 120-degree heat only increased our desire to make it work. While at Kandahar Airport, the Air Force landed the first C-5 in a combat area since Vietnam. Most of the Air Force personnel watched that evening.

I am very proud of the part the 108th ARW plays in the mission of the Air Force. Our place here and overseas is integral in the success of all that we are tasked to do. I am personally proud of our crew and the job we did to aid in the mission of the Army and Air Force in Afghanistan.

Wondering Photographer by Senior Airman Qianna Snooks

What does Memorial Day mean to you and how do you plan to celebrate it?



**Technical Sgt.
Joyce Baker,
Paralegal**

It's a day to reflect on the commitment and contributions that military members have made and I usually do something to commemorate the day and what it means, whether it's going to a parade or a Memorial Day function.



**Technical Sgt.
Mimi Reed,
LS**

I can't express how proud I am of our armed forces and the phenomenal job they are doing in Iraq; and also all of our troops in past wars and conflicts. I salute them all, and on Memorial Day I will commemorate them with gusto!



**Lt. Col. Bruce
Walker,
Optometry**

It's obviously a time to reflect on what our veterans have done for us, preserving freedom. And now we have a new group to welcome back. My son's in the Army, and he's over there. I'll probably celebrate it with family and quietly at home. We'll have the big party when my kid comes home.



**Technical Sgt.
David Spedden,
LGSC**

Memorial Day is for the recognition for all those who have fought and dies for our country. I'll celebrate by paying homage and we're going to have a ceremony at work the Friday before.



**Senior Airman
Sandra Rivera,
141st ARS**

I celebrate Memorial Day with the family. It's about being together and the memories. Not just about the past; it's about past and future events.



**Senior Airman
Gil Hernandez,
SCX**

I plan on spending it with my family, eating well and dedicating a toast to those military members who couldn't be here to celebrate it.

Front and Center

Name: Amy E. Nevells

Rank: Staff Sergeant

Age: 27

Time in Service: Four years in the active-duty Air Force; five years in the Air Guard

Job in 108th: Weather forecaster

Civilian job: Formerly, a weather forecaster for the Department of Defense.

Family: Originally from New York.

Favorite food: Everything now because I'm pregnant; probably like chocolate or pizza.

Movie last seen: Chicago

Favorite TV show: Scrubs; that's a good one.

Last book read: Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

Favorite music group/genre: Dave Matthews Band

Hobbies: I like sports. I like to read, cooking and I do stained glass also.

I most admire: My parents; they're just good role models and family has always been important.

Dream vacation: I'd probably go to Australia, just to be able to explore the wildlife and go into the outback. It's really beautiful there, the land, the water and the diving. I would really like to go diving.

Goals: To be a good mother and to hopefully finish my graduate school in the next two years.

Words I live by: Just to try to be an honest, good person; be true to yourself.

Pet peeve: People who are ignorant.

What I like most about the 108th: The camaraderie that exists.

What made you enlist in the military: I joined for the travel opportunities and the satisfaction you get from serving your country.



108th Finance selected as ANG 2002 Comptroller Organization of the Year

By Staff Sgt. Barb Harbison
Editor, *Wing Tips*

The Air National Guard selected the 108th Finance Section as the Financial Management and Comptroller Organization of the Year for Fiscal Year 2002.

While simultaneously supporting Operation Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom finance taskings, the 16 members of the finance team maintained control of more than \$54 million in Operations and Maintenance funds and more than \$800,000 in Military Personnel funds, and dispersed \$15 million in military payroll, all with virtually 100 percent accuracy. They also managed to deploy a member of their team to Oman, another selected as 108th NCO of the Year and as always, had other team members working extra duties in the wing.

The team at finance, which consists of 12 full-time military employees, two full time civilian employees and four traditional Guardsmembers also developed a user-friendly process for the demobilization phase, making it easier for the airmen and provides them with personalized information regarding available options for leave and entitlements. They also streamlined the travel voucher processing to eliminate work for traveling wing members.

Continuing their excellent management and control of the government travel card program has resulted in the 108th having the seventh best delinquency rate of all ANG units.

Lt. Col. Ronald Alfors, 108th Comptroller and Chief Master Sgt. Leon Cisek, 108th Deputy Comptroller, accepted the award and an ANG Director's coin from Lt. Gen. Daniel James III, Director, Air National Guard, during an ANG Comptrollers luncheon in Arlington, Va.



Americans embrace "Gift of Groceries" program for military

Response to the commissary "Gift of Groceries" program skyrocketed in March as Americans sought ways to support military families at home. The program allows anyone to purchase gift certificates to give to military families and friends; only authorized shoppers can redeem them at commissaries worldwide. Military charities such as Fisher House Foundation, USO and Air Force Aid Society now accept donated grocery certificates for military families in need, and civilian organizations that want to help military families are getting involved, too. The Mission Valley Christian Fellowship near San Diego recently donated \$50,000 in commissary gift certificates through Operation Homefront, a California-based effort to support local military families. The "Gift of Groceries" is available by calling toll free (U.S. only) 1-877-770-4438 and through <http://www.commissaries.com>.

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